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The Inception of Iowa Railroads

James W. Grimes

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wrote as follows to his friend who had looked the matter up: "Thank you very much for the information about the naming of Floyd County. The evidence you present is conclusive, and I shall consider it final."

In all probability, therefore, these facts will be incorporated in Dr. Coues editorial notes, and so be accepted, forever ending a controversy which might be protracted but for the evidence of those two clear-headed witnesses—Messrs. P. M. Casady and George G. Wright of Des Moines.

THE INCEPTION OF IOWA RAILROADS.

The Rev. William Salter, D. D., of Burlington, has sent many interesting documents to our Historical Department, but none more so than the following letter by Gov. and United States Senator James W. Grimes. In the year 1852 there was not a mile of railroad in the State of Iowa. In fact, none even reached the eastern bank of the Mississippi until two years later. The legislature had convened at Iowa City, on the 6th day of December, 1852. The representatives from Des Moines County, in the House of Representatives, were James W. Grimes, Justus Clark, W. Seymour and J. Wilson Williams. Gen. Augustus Caesar Dodge was one of our United States Senators, and at his post of duty at Washington. During the third week of the session Mr. Grimes wrote Gen. Dodge on railroad questions, as follows:

HOUSE OF REP'S, IOWA CITY, Dec. 24, '52.

DEAR SIR:—I have supposed that you might desire some information in relation to the present condition of railroad matters in this city. You may obtain information from other sources, and if so you will pardon me for troubling you. The project of a road from Dubuque to Keokuk is entirely dead. It has only twenty-one friends in the House to forty-two against it, and the disproportion is about the same in the Senate. Memorials passed are for three roads;

1st. A road from Burlington to the Missouri River, at or near the mouth of Platte.

2nd. A road from Davenport *via* Muscatine to Kanesville (Council Bluffs.)

3rd. A road from Dubuque to Fort Des Moines.

No other memorials will pass this winter, and the above may be regarded as the settled policy of the State. I will endeavor to have the memorials forwarded to you as soon as they shall be enrolled.

Yours truly, etc.,

JAMES W. GRIMES.

In view of the immense development of railroads in Iowa, this letter would indicate that the ambition of the people of the State at that day, in this direction, was very moderate. The principal object for which Mr. Grimes became a member of that legislature was to start a movement in behalf of building railroads, and in this he succeeded admirably. He introduced the memorial for a grant of land by Congress to aid in the construction of the Burlington and Missouri railroad, and without doubt was friendly to the other lines mentioned, which were endorsed by the legislature.

“THE UNCONSIDERED NOW.”

The following article from the pen of Hon. S. M. Clark of the Keokuk *Gate City*, in a style at once clear and convincing, sets forth the idea which underlies the work of historical collecting, not only in this State, but everywhere else. We commend it to our readers as affording an excellent illustration of the efforts of the Historical Department of Iowa, the chief work of which is the preservation of the data for the history of the State and its people—those facts which, however much they may be “unconsidered now,” will in future days be worth a thousand fold more than all they cost. It has been a con-

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